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H.M. KING GEORGE V.

(W. & D. Downey.)

THE KING'S MESSAGES

To the Sovereigns and Heads of the Allied States :—

“ August 3rd, 1916 (midnight).

“ On this day, the second anniversary of the commencement of the great conflict in which my country and her gallant Allies are engaged, I desire to convey to you my steadfast resolution to prosecute the war until our united efforts have attained the objects for which we have in common taken up arms.

“ I feel assured that you are in accord with me in the determination that the sacrifices which our valiant troops have so nobly made shall not have been offered in vain, and that the liberties for which they are fighting shall be fully guaranteed and secured.

GEORGE R.I.”

ON THE ANNIVERSARY.

To the King of the Belgians :—

“ August 3rd, 1916 (midnight).

“ On this second anniversary of the day on which my country took up arms to resist the violation of the neutrality of Belgium, I desire to assure Your Majesty of my confidence that the United efforts of the Allies will liberate Belgium from the oppression of her aggressors, and will restore to her the full enjoyment of her national and economic independence.

“ I would also desire to convey to Your Majesty my deep sympathy in the grievous trials to which Belgium has been so unjustly subjected, and which she has borne with such admirable fortitude.

GEORGE R.I.”

REPLIES TO THE KING'S MESSAGES.

The King has received the following messages in answer to his telegram to the heads of the Allied States on the second anniversary of the declaration of war :—

President Poincaré.

I found your Majesty's telegram to-night on my return from the battlefield, where the British and French troops are fighting like brothers side by side. It is impossible to watch them at their task without having absolute confidence in the success of the great cause which they are defending in common. I thank your Majesty for your message, and I assure you that France, in spite of her losses and her sacrifices, is, like Great Britain and the faithful Allies, determined to continue the war until right has conquered.



The Emperor of Russia.

I thank your Majesty for your message on the second anniversary of this great war, and I heartily reciprocate the resolution you make in conjunction with our gallant Allies. I am equally determined that we in Russia shall make good the sacrifices which my brave troops and my people have given to a just cause, which will bring the reward we seek, and that the peace for which we fight shall be secured by a complete victory over our enemies.



The King of Italy.

I am deeply touched by the telegram which your Majesty sent to me on the occasion of the second anniversary of the day on which began the great struggle in which Great Britain and her Allies are participating. I fully agree with your Majesty in the unalterable decision to continue the struggle until the objects for which we took up arms are attained. I, too, have the firm conviction that the sacrifices so valiantly made by our troops will not be in vain, but will assure the existence of liberty and justice.



The Emperor of Japan.

Your Majesty's welcome message on the second anniversary of the commencement of the war has impressed me very deeply. After all the trials of the great defensive battle, the indomitable armies of the Allies are now marching forward steadily and successfully on all fronts, and I beg your Majesty to believe that I am entirely in accord with you in the strong determination to carry on the struggle until our common cause for right and freedom shall have been fully vindicated.



The King of the Belgians.

I thank your Majesty for the sentiments expressed in your telegram. With you I have absolute confidence that Belgium, who took up arms to fulfil her international duties, will be re-established in her full political and economic independence. I desire also to express to your Majesty my deep admiration for the valour and splendid military qualities displayed by the troops of the British Empire in the incessant battles they are waging.



The King of Serbia.

I share, from the bottom of my heart, the sentiments which your Majesty has been good enough to address to me on the occasion of the second anniversary of the war. I hasten to assure you with what satisfaction I receive this new witness of the inflexible resolve to achieve the triumph of the noble cause for which the precious blood of the brave soldiers of the Allies has run in streams.





THE RIGHT HON. H. H. ASQUITH.

MR. ASQUITH'S
Speech at the Queen's Hall.

August 4th, 1916.

This is primarily a London meeting, but I wish to repeat what your chairman has said in expressing our acknowledgments and gratitude for the presence here to-night on the platform of the distinguished Ambassadors of Russia and Italy, and for the special compliment paid to us by the presence of M. Painlevé.

Two years ago, in the week or weeks which preceded the outbreak of war, Germany was the victim of a double delusion. She was absolutely certain that whatever we here might do or say in the way of protest we should never join France and Russia in arms. She was equally assured that the weak and, it seemed to her, defenceless kingdom of Belgium could be cajoled or coerced into allowing her what she most needed—a right of way into France. The calculation was that we here in Great Britain, having found or devised some formula of escape from our treaty obligations, would watch as

detached spectators with more or less unmoved eyes, certainly with folded arms, the gradually unrolling spectacle of the devastation, if need be the enslavement, of Belgium, the spoliation of France, the practical annihilation of the whole system of free States in the west of the European Continent, and the setting up, at our very doors, of a dominating and menacing despotism.

That was a mistake, and, as it turned out, a very costly mistake, for in the two years that have since passed, this Empire of ours—the most peace-loving family of communities on the face of the civilised globe—has raised and sent into the field five millions of its sons to frustrate those designs. That has been and is our answer to those who thought that they could safely treat us here as so wrapped up in the selfish pursuit of material prosperity, as so enervated by wealth, by comfort, by moral decay, that we had lost both the sense of honour and the power to vindicate it at the risk of life. Never, even in the tangled and bungled web of German diplomacy, has there been an error so crude in conception and so disastrously fatal to its authors.

Germany—I am repeating a familiar point but it is one which on an anniversary like this must be recalled—Germany had for more than a generation been held up by her native professors and by their dupes in other countries as the pre-eminent example of what a nation

can achieve by organisation and intelligence. But what they did not allow for was that the systematised discipline of ideas and enterprise, carefully and skilfully managed by an omnipotent State, was aimed, not at the free self-development of individuals or communities or even at securing for Germany an adequate place in the sun, but at the subjugation of smaller States and the crippling of larger ones that might presume to stand in her way towards the domination of the Western world.

CONTEST BETWEEN IDEALS.

When, therefore, the glove was thrown down two years ago to-day and was taken up by the Allied Powers we very soon recognised—and we know it well to-day—that we had reached one of those epoch-making issues in which the contest is not between one Power and another, nor one group of Powers and another, but in which the contest is between separate and irreconcilable ideals ; between, on the one side, the forces which stand for freedom, for variety of type and of organisation, for the unfettered progress of humanity, and on the other side the forces which are bound, sooner or later, to suppress and to sterilise all the possible deeds that transform and regenerate the world. I think there is a growing consciousness that this war is something more than a mere clash of arms and that that accounts for the new

spirit which has been breathed into our nation. It is that spirit, tempered and strengthened by the ordeal of two years of stern and searching discipline, that to-night on this momentous anniversary fills every class of our fellow-subjects in every quarter of his Majesty's dominions.

I am not going to enter into a detailed survey of the various theatres of war on land and sea. I would rather concentrate your attention on one or two of the general aspects of the struggle which to-morrow enters on its third year. In the first place I should like to call attention—I am glad to do so in the presence of the representatives of our Allies—to the unbroken unity of the Allies. (Cheers.)

As has often been pointed out, and as is true, the enemy for the time being was able to profit by the advantages, both military and political, that spring from all the operations, alike of war and diplomacy, being under a single control. The Allies are four independent Powers, each with habits of mind, forms of speech, traditions, methods of its own, and from the necessities of the case it followed that they must individually regard some of the problems which a war like this from time to time presents, if not from divergent angles, at least in a different perspective. Nothing has been more remarkable during the last year than the success with which the Allies have pursued

a common policy and a united plan. That has been due, perhaps, to some extent to a simplification in our machinery, but I think it has been still more largely due to the direct and habitual personal intercourse between the statesmen and soldiers of the Allied Powers.

At any rate at this moment I am glad to be able to say—and I am sure I shall have the assent of all those sitting around me—that for all the purposes of the war there is complete concert between us. And you can have no better practical illustration of that undoubted fact than the concurrent offensive which is being now pushed with such vigour and success on no less than three fronts of the theatre of war. (Cheers.)

OUR VOLUNTARY ARMIES.

Coming to ourselves, I think the most conspicuous and encouraging feature of the last year has been the enormous growth both in numbers and in quality of our fighting forces. I shall not revive—far be it from me—the various controversies about recruiting, but I think we shall all agree that the most glorious and stimulating fact in the creation of our new Army is the vast number of men of every station in life, drawn from every part of the United Kingdom and of the Dominions beyond the seas, who have voluntarily left their homes, their families, their callings, to risk their lives

in the service of the State. (Cheers.) I will venture to say that there is not a parent in this hall or in any similar assembly of Englishmen, Scotsmen, or Irishmen, with sons of military age, who has not during the past two years contributed, and contributed willingly and gladly, to the common effort of sacrifice.

No one knows better than our chairman that it was Lord Kitchener (cheers) who, more than any other man, called that marvellous force into being, welded it into a compact and disciplined mass, and imbued it with his own unboasting but unconquerable spirit. In losing him we sustain a greater blow than the Germans have inflicted or will inflict upon us, but it is a consolation to those like myself who mourn and miss him most to know that he lived to see his handiwork all but complete. Those New Armies who, during the last month, have been gaining for themselves, officers and men alike, immortal honour on the blood-stained fields of Picardy—those New Armies are the best memorial Lord Kitchener could have won.

OUR DEBT TO THE NAVY.

I have spoken of the Army. But what can I say of our debt, and the debt of our Allies also, to the British Navy? The Navy, like the Army, has been anxious to try conclusions with the enemy. The enemy took good care

that their chances of doing so shall be few and far between. Since its glorious victory of the 31st of May the German High Sea Fleet, or what remains of it, has not ventured to emerge from its ports. It has shrunk, apparently, from repeating its triumphant experience. (Laughter.) As I said at the time, a couple more of such victories and there would be nothing or very little left of the German Fleet. (Laughter.)

But though our Navy is rarely indulged with a fair-and-square fight, let us never forget—we are too apt to forget—that it is the Navy, unobtrusive, silent, but always on the watch, with its ever-tightening grip, that is starving the German power of resistance and throttling the life of Germany. There has never in the whole of history been such a decisive proof of the supreme, nay capital, importance of the command of the sea. I think we shall all agree that it was a wise and far-sighted policy that has led our statesmen of all parties and schools in the past to insist on the cardinal necessity for us of naval supremacy.

Just consider what has been the consequence of this war. We have been able to feed our soldiers. We continue to be supplied from oversea with the necessary materials for our industry; we have transported millions of troops over almost all the oceans of the world at practically no loss, and with the aid of our

mercantile marine we are rendering the same services to all our Allies. All that has been done and is being done with practical immunity save for occasional loss from submarine activity, conducted as you know it is with a total disregard of all the laws and usages of war.

I have spoken of the Allies, I have spoken of ourselves. Let me, before I finish, say a word about the enemy. He is everywhere on the defensive. In none of the quarters, in none of the theatres of war does he retain or attempt to retain the initiative, and there are signs which can hardly be deceptive of material weakening and exhaustion. All the more reason that we, the Allies, should co-operate to maintain the struggle—naval, military, financial, moral—with increasing tenacity and unrelaxing will. (Cheers.)

GERMAN BARBARITIES.

There is one feature, to which the Chairman has already alluded, in the later developments of the enemy's methods which seems, I confess, to my mind to indicate a sense of desperation—I mean the recrudescence of deliberate and calculated barbarity. The Belgian civil population, who refuse to work to maintain and improve the military position of their invaders and oppressors, to compel them to do so are literally being treated like slaves. The horrors of the recent deportations of large numbers

of the inhabitants of the towns of Northern France, the midnight raids on private dwellings, the wholesale deportations of women and girls, is a story which, when it comes to be fully written, will be found to blacken even the besmirched annals of the German Army.

Nor can we here in England forget the latest infamy directed against ourselves, the judicial murder of Captain Fryatt, which has stirred the indignation and outraged the conscience of the whole civilised world. We are considering, in concert with our Allies, what are the most appropriate and effective methods of dealing with those atrocities, their authors, and the nation which condones, and not only condones, but applauds them. Remember it is a condition of any action taken now or hereafter, if it is to be really effective, that we must win the war.

That is the supreme object to which everything else is subordinate

PROSPECTS OF VICTORY.

I have said to "win the war." It is, I believe, the united opinion of the Allied General Staff that our prospects of victory have never been so bright nor so full of promise. (Loud cheers.) We have seen during the last six weeks the brilliant Russian success in Galicia and the Bukovina. We have seen the complete failure of the Austrian offensive in the Trentino

We have seen the Turkish retirement in Armenia. We have seen the check—I think I may say the failure—of the German attack at Verdun. And we have seen the magnificent advance of the Allies on the Somme.

Mr. Chairman, I agree with you—this is not the time for faintheartedness, for petty criticism—(cheers)—for the rather contemptible procedure of seeking for a scapegoat, and certainly not for even a semblance of divided counsels and of a broken or wavering front. All that we, all that our Allies, all that our cause needs is concentration of purpose—and as far as we in this country are concerned the continued exercise throughout the kingdom and the Empire of the same unselfish far-sighted patriotism which is shown this week by the readiness of hundreds of thousands, nay millions of our best workers, men and women alike—many of them weary and hard-pressed with their past labours—to forgo their holiday.

Early in the war I quoted a sentence which Mr. Gladstone used in 1870. “The greatest triumph of our time,” he said, “has been the enthronement of the idea of public right as the governing idea of European politics.” Mr. Gladstone worked all his life for that noble purpose. He did not live to see its attainment. By the victory of the Allies, the enthronement of public right here in Europe will pass from the domain of ideals and of aspirations into that

of concrete and achieved realities. What does public right mean ?

I will tell you what I understand it to mean—an equal level of opportunity and of independence as between small States and great States, as between the weak and the strong ; safeguards resting upon the common will of Europe, and, I hope, not of Europe alone, against aggression, against international covetousness and bad faith, against the wanton recourse in case of dispute to the use of force and the disturbance of peace ; finally, as the result of it all, a great partnership of nations federated together in the joint pursuit of a freer and fuller life for countless millions who by their efforts and their sacrifice, generation after generation, maintain the progress and enrich the inheritance of humanity. (Cheers.)



THE RIGHT HON. A. BONAR LAW.

MR. BONAR LAW'S SPEECH.

We have entered to-day, as this meeting reminds us, upon the third year of the most terrible struggle which has ever taken place in the world. This is the greatest war of which there is any record, not only for the number of men who are engaged in it, and for the number—terrible, alas!—who have already fallen in it, but, as the Prime Minister pointed out, for the issues which are to be decided by it.

It is not only the greatest war, but from the point of view of our enemies, of our chief enemy in particular, it is the wickedest war that the world has ever known. The greatest crime is not, as I think, the cruelties of which we have heard. The greatest crime is the beginning of this war in itself.

In the fateful week which we all remember so well, two years ago, when peace or war was trembling in the balance, all the Powers of Europe, I think, except one—for even Austria, whose blundering diplomacy has been a proverb for generations ; even Austria, which had come to the very brink of the precipice, was moving back when the other partner plunged her in

the desired place. The key to peace or war was in Berlin. The Emperor had but to whisper the word peace, and there would have been no war. He did not speak that word because in their belief the hour for which there had been generations of preparation had come, and they had decided upon war. With the cold-blooded calculation that they would gain by the war, they brought all this misery upon the world, as careless of the blood even of their own people as the chess-player who sacrifices pawns to secure and win the game. The victory at which we are aiming, which we mean to secure, will be no victory at all if it does not mean this—that never again in our time or in the time of those who come after us will it be in the power of one man or a group of men to plunge the world into misery. (Cheers.)

But though that is the chief crime, others have not been lacking. There have been other wars, perhaps, which have been marked by brutalities as great as, or almost as great, but there is this distinction, that in those other wars the excesses have come from below, from men in the heat of action, while in this war they have come deliberately by instruction from above, with a view to facilitating the triumph of their arms. And there is this further—excesses in other wars have been committed sometimes by barbarians, but these excesses are all the more appalling because behind them

is not only brutal force, but all the resources of invention, of science, and of intellect. They have all had the same purpose, and this latest outrage, of which the Prime Minister has spoken, has made men of calm judgment see red, if I may say so, and hunt for some mode of immediate vengeance.

GERMAN NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE.

That outrage means two things. It means that they are counting, and not without reason, upon this—that the British people will never willingly compete in atrocities of that kind. But they are counting on something else. They think that this example will deter other British seamen from trying to save the lives of those who are in their ships. How little German nature understands human nature! They will learn that that outrage will stimulate effort.

How stupid it really all is! Now that our enemy have lost, and lost for ever, the advantages which their preparation gave them, now that the toils are closing around them, their one hope of escape is disunion among the Allies and a separate peace. By these methods they have made such an outlet—which would never have occurred in any case—impossible, for wherever the German troops have gone their footsteps have been marked by blood, and they have left behind them memories which cry aloud for victory and for vengeance.

THE ENDURANCE OF FRANCE AND RUSSIA.

In looking back on the two years which have passed there is much that we can look back upon with pride, and everything which enables us to look forward to the future, not with hope only, but with complete confidence. I shall not attempt to speak of all our Allies—of Belgium, who has suffered so much, of Serbia, who is awaiting the hour of the renewal of the conflict, of Italy, who has driven back finally the Austrian advance. But I should like to say a word about two of them.

Our hearts are all moved by the Russian victories. Russia is playing in this war the *rôle* which she has played in every war. She has often lost battles, but as Frederick the Great, who established Russian militarism, discovered, and as Napoleon discovered later, she has never been defeated. That is not due alone to her resources and numbers ; it is due also to that dogged perseverance of character through which, the more the Germans drove them back the more determined they were to come forward, and those qualities they are displaying now.

What shall I say about France ? She has, next to Belgium and Serbia, borne the strain of this struggle. The soldiers have displayed all the qualities which are expected from French troops. They have shown the courage, the dash, and the brilliance which they have always

displayed, but in their struggle in the six months before Verdun they have shown other qualities of tenacity, fixity of purpose, and of determination never to yield an inch till the victory is won, which have given them, if possible, new value in our eyes.

THE EMPIRE'S PART.

When this war began our enemies said, and I believe they believed, that the Oversea possessions of this Empire would drop away from us. They were mistaken. The outstanding feature of this war will always be, not the good will of the Dominions merely, but the additional strength which has come to the Mother Country. We are proud of what India has done. The loyalty in such temptations which she has shown is perhaps something of which we, as a nation, have as much reason to be proud as we have that we are the rulers of India. And our self-governing Dominions—I speak first of South Africa. One German possession, larger, I think, by far than the German Empire, has already been won by one South African General. Another German possession, twice as large as the German Empire, East Africa, is from their point of view not in a healthy condition. (Laughter.) I happened to see yesterday a map published in South Africa, which can hardly be considered premature, on which East Africa is coloured red. (Laughter.)

MESSAGES FROM SOUTH AFRICA.

I have here messages which have come to Mr. Schreiner, the representative of South Africa, which he has asked me to read to this audience. The first is from General Botha :—

“ The close of the second year of this terrible world war so unnecessarily forced on the Allies sees them now in a better position than at the beginning. This war must be prosecuted with all determination. Peace at the present time could only result in preparations for an even more appalling struggle. No lasting peace is possible without complete victory. Let us press on with unfailing courage, and strain every nerve to obtain our end.”

The second is from General Smuts :—

“ On this anniversary of the declaration of war I beg to send through you a message of good cheer from the wilds of East Africa. Weak, unorganised, and unprepared, we entered most reluctantly into this struggle against the mightiest military system in history, in the faith that right is might. That faith is the only basis, not only of political liberty and ethical ideals, but also for international relations in the future. Blinded by Imperialistic visions of success, by *Realpolitik*, the great German people have turned their *Kultur*, science and economic organisation into instruments of wrong, crime, and ruthless disregard of com-

mon morality and Christianity. Against them are arrayed the great unseen forces of human progress. It is for us to take our stand as co-workers with this force. It is our unshakable resolve that they shall not go under, but emerge victorious in the supreme crisis of western civilisation. Our victory will secure the highest good, not only for ourselves, but for our enemies, and if utilised in no selfish spirit may surely lead to a golden age of peace and progress."

We are proud of what Canada and Australia have done. These Commonwealths have sprung to manhood, they have become nations, and already from this war they have glorious victories behind them. The Kaiser is a great Empire-builder, but it is not his Empire which he is building. He has done more to weld the British Empire together than could have been done by generations of her sons.

BRITAIN'S PART.

I should like to say a word about the Mother Country. I think it has done something too. I think it is true to say that never in the whole course of what we may call the glorious history of our country has she played a better part than she has done in this war. Those who wish to know what the country has done, let them throw their minds back to what, two years ago, we could have thought it possible to do,

and compare that with what has actually been done. When the war broke out our enemies expected and our Allies trusted that our Navy would play a great part. It has. (Cheers.) For two years our sailors have kept their silent, their lonely and arduous vigil, upon which the life of this country and the fortunes of this war depended, and when the opportunity came they were glad to allow the German Fleet to win the victory of which the Prime Minister has spoken. (Laughter and cheers.)

Never in our history has naval supremacy been so great as in this war, and when the war is over it will be realised, as I think it is realised by our Allies to-day, that without our Navy victory would have been impossible, and that with our Navy victory will be complete.

• What about our Army? Who could have foreseen—except the one man who did foresee and prepare for it—Lord Kitchener—that to-day we should have had in the field armies which even from the point of view of numbers compare with the great armies on the Continent, armies which are ready now to take a part, and a vital part, in the struggle which is still in front of us. They have been raised, most of them, from men who were not compelled, but who went of their own free will, to pay, if necessary, the last debt of duty to their country. We have now another method of securing troops, and I venture to say that, in the view

of anyone who realises, as I always have done, how deep-rooted among the classes most affected by it was the terror and dislike of compulsion, perhaps the greatest credit for all that has happened is due to the fact that when compulsion was necessary the country adopted it without a murmur.

WOMEN'S SACRIFICE.

And what about the work at home? The Prime Minister has spoken of the holidays which are abandoned. That is only a symbol. Every class has been willing to emulate every other in willingness of sacrifice. Rich and poor, they have paid the like service to their country, and at home here the women have shown equal readiness to play their part. They are not only competing with men, they are stimulating men by their competition in the supply of munitions to help us on to victory. (Cheers.) They have done something more than that, perhaps something harder than that. Everywhere, I am told, the women, instead of holding back the men from risking their lives, have urged, if that were necessary, their husbands, their sons, their lovers, to go forward in the service of their country. (Cheers.) I think that without exaggeration we may say that there is nothing so marvellous, in my view, as the way in which and the rapidity with which this country has eagerly organised itself for the great struggle in which we are engaged.

The chairman said we could not see the end. Not yet, but we know that it is coming, and I wonder what at this moment is the feeling which is uppermost in our minds. If there were any of us who when war was only a name had our imaginations rather attracted by the panoply, pageantry, and glory of war, now that we know what war means we have lost that feeling. We have always been a peace-loving country. We hated war : and now that we know what war means, we hate it more than ever. (Hear, hear.) What we are thinking of is not victory, though we long for that. When we see our darkened streets we think of the homes from which the light has been taken and will never return in this world. We think of the young men we see wounded and maimed. So we long for peace, and we pray for peace. But it must be peace that will give us the security of peace in the future, which will make us feel certain that the lives which have been laid down shall not be sacrificed in vain, and that never again will there be a possibility of the black cloud of militarism which threatened us for many years bursting again in ruin on the world. (Cheers.)



THE RIGHT HON. A. J. BALFOUR.

THE NAVY'S PART.

Fruits of the Battle of Jutland.

MR. BALFOUR'S MESSAGE.

The second anniversary of the British declaration of war provides a fitting opportunity for a brief survey of the present naval situation. Public attention is inevitably concentrated upon the great military operations by which the Allies are pressing with ever-increasing severity upon the Central Powers from the east, the west, and the south ; and though none of us are likely to ignore the part which the Navy plays in the campaign, it is not easy even for those who reflect much on these subjects to see things in their true perspective ; for those who content themselves with the daily bulletins it is impossible. They cannot believe that anything important is done when nothing important seems to happen.

It is true that the great battle off Jutland for a moment broke the monotony of the naval situation, and its consequences, moral and

material, cannot easily be overrated. An Allied diplomatist assured me that in his view it was the turning point of the war. The tide which had long ceased to help our enemies began from that moment to flow strongly in our favour. This much at least is true, that every week which has passed since the German High Seas Fleet were driven damaged into port has seen a new success for the Allies in one part or other of the field of operations.

It would be an error, however, to suppose that the naval victory changed the situation ; what it did was to confirm it. Before Jutland, as after it, the German Fleet was imprisoned ; the battle was an attempt to break the bars and burst the confining gates ; it failed, and with its failure the High Seas Fleet sank again into impotence.

THE GERMAN "VICTORY."

It may perhaps be objected that this is but a British view of British triumphs, and that German accounts of naval doings tell a very different story, and leave a very different impression upon the military student. But this is not so. Study the German utterances with care, and you will find that they give precisely the same general impression of British sea power and the naval position as that which I have just expressed. It is quite true that they call that a victory which the rest of the

world calls a defeat. But though they talk in German, their meaning can quite easily be expressed in intelligible English, for in essence both parties are agreed.

After all, the object of a naval battle is to obtain the command of the sea, or to keep it ; and it is certain that Germany has not obtained it, and that we have not lost it. The tests of this assertion are easy to apply. Has the grip of the British blockade relaxed since May 31st ? Has it not, on the contrary, tightened ? Is it or is it not becoming more difficult for the Germans to import raw material and foodstuffs ; and to pay for them by the export of their manufactures ? The Germans themselves will admit that it is becoming more difficult. Hence the violence of their invectives against Britain ; and hence their unwearied repetition of the cry that Britain is the arch enemy that must at all costs be humbled to the dust.

Again, if they felt themselves on their way to maritime equality, would they spend so much breath in advertising the performances of the submarine which, flying a commercial flag, carried 280 tons of German produce—to say nothing of an autograph letter of the Kaiser's—from Bremen to Baltimore ? The operation itself involved no naval difficulty. Its commercial results were necessarily infinitesimal ; its whole interest in German eyes lay in the fact that by using a submarine they

could elude the barrier raised by the British Fleet between them and the outer world ; a barrier which they knew their own fleet could neither break nor weaken.

But sea power shows itself not merely in denying the waterways of the world to the enemy, but in using them for your own military purposes. And here again there is a singular discrepancy between German boasts about the greatness of the German Fleet and German admissions about its impotence. Since, nearly two years ago, England's " contemptible little Army " was sent into France, a steady and ever-increasing flow of men and munitions has been poured across the waters of the Channel. It has reached colossal proportions ; its effects on the war may well be decisive ; yet never has it been more secure from attack by enemy battleships or cruisers than it has been since the German " victory " of May 31st.

GERMAN BOASTS.

But there are longer sea routes and more distant operations which in this connection it is fitting to remember. It seems that on the German anniversary of the war the German Press bade the German public to take comfort from an attentive study of the map. " See," they said, " how much enemy territory both in the East and in the West the armies of the Fatherland occupy ; see—and take heart.

The amount of comfort, however, which the study of maps is capable of conveying depends partly on the maps you choose. Even the map of Europe shows an ever-shrinking battle-line. But why look only at Europe? Germany for 20 years has advertised itself as a great colonial Power; and it was to conquer and maintain its position as a great colonial Power that German fleets were built.

Let us, then, choose a map which contains her overseas Empire. At the beginning of August, 1914, Germany possessed colonies in the China Seas, in the Malay Archipelago, in the Pacific Ocean, in West Africa, in South-West Africa, in East Africa. All have gone except the last; and the last whilst I write seems slipping from her grasp. The Navy has not conquered them; in the actual fighting by which they have been or are being acquired the Navy has taken a very important yet not the leading part. But without the British Navy to contain the German Fleet, the operations which bid fair to strip Germany of every one of her oversea possessions could not have been successful—could not even have been attempted.

Has, then, the battle of Jutland opened up the smallest prospect of Germany's regaining what she has lost? Can it give a moment's respite to the hard-pressed colonist in German East Africa? I doubt whether it has ever

occurred to any German (and I am sure it has occurred to nobody else) that anything which the German Fleet has done, is doing, or can do will delay for one moment the final triumph of General Smuts over the last of Germany's oversea possessions.

SUBMARINE WARFARE.

If any desire yet further proof of the value which the Germans really attach to their "victorious" fleet I advise them to study the German policy of submarine warfare. The advantage of submarine attacks on commerce is that they cannot be controlled by superior fleet power in the same way as attacks by cruisers. The disadvantage is that they cannot be carried out on a large scale consistently with the laws of war or the requirements of humanity. They make, therefore, a double appeal to German militarism ; an appeal to its prudence and an appeal to its brutality. The Germans knew their "victorious" fleet was useless ; it could be kept safe in harbour while submarine warfare went on merrily outside. They knew that submarines cannot be brought to action by battleships or battle cruisers. They thought, therefore, that to these new commerce destroyers our merchant ships must fall an easy prey, unprotected by our ships of war and unable to protect themselves.

They are wrong in both respects ; and doubtless it is their wrath at the skill and

energy with which British merchant captains and British crews have defended the lives and property under their charge that has driven the German Admiralty into their latest and stupidest act of calculated ferocity—the judicial murder of Captain Fryatt.

I do not propose to argue this case ; it is not worth arguing. Why should we do the German military authorities the injustice of supposing that they were animated by any solicitude for the principles of international law, and blundered into illegality by some unhappy accident ? Their folly was of a different kind, and flowed from a different course. They knew quite well that when Captain Fryatt's gallantry saved his ship, the Germans had sunk without warning 22 British merchant ships, and had attempted to sink many others. They knew that in refusing tamely to submit himself to such a fate he was doing his duty as a man of courage and of honour. They were resolved at all costs to discourage imitation !

“FREEDOM OF THE SEAS.”

What blunderers they are ! I doubt not their ability to manipulate machines. But of managing men, unless it be German men, they know less than nothing. They are always wrong ; and they are wrong because they always suppose that if they behave like brutes they can cow their enemies into behaving like cowards. Small is their knowledge of our

merchant seamen. Their trade, indeed, is not war—they live by the arts of peace. But in no class does patriotism burn with a purer flame, or show itself in deeds of higher courage and self-devotion. I doubt whether there is one of them to be found who is not resolved to defend himself to the last against piratical attack; but if such a one there be, depend upon it he will be cured by the last exhibition of German civilisation.

And what must the neutrals think of all this? They are constantly assured by German advocates that the Central Powers are fighting for the “freedom of the seas.” It is a phrase with different meanings in different mouths; but we have now had ample opportunities of judging what it means to the Germans. It means that the German Navy is to behave at sea as the German Army behave on land. It means that neither enemy civilians nor neutrals are to possess rights against militant Germany; that those who do not resist will be drowned, and those who do will be shot. Already 244 neutral merchant ships have been sunk in defiance of law and of humanity; the number daily grows. Mankind with now two years’ experience of war behind it has made up its mind about German culture; it is not, I think, without material for forming a judgment about German freedom.

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

Admiralty, August 4th.



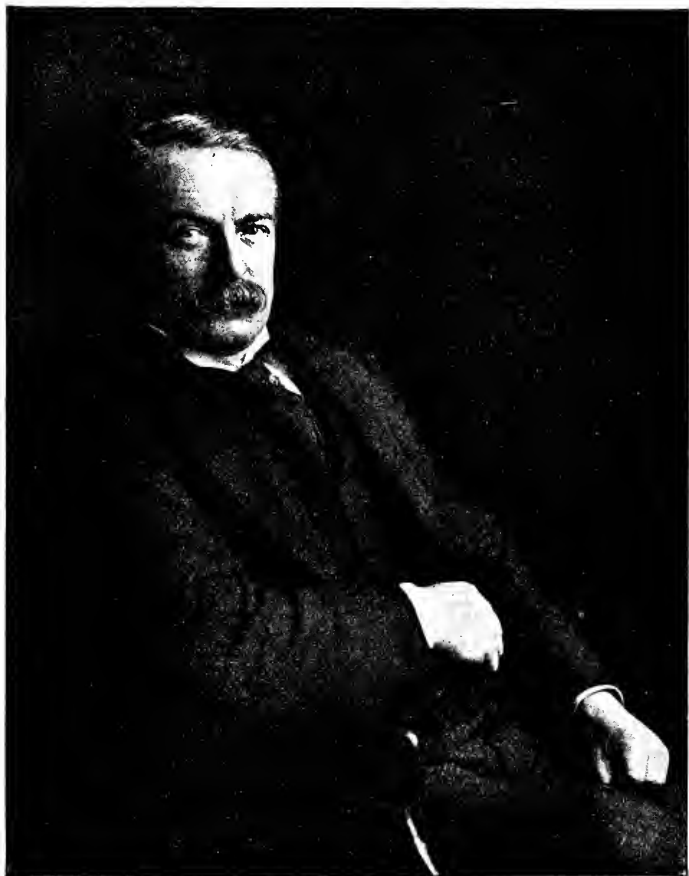


Photo by Reginald Haines.

THE RIGHT HON. D. LLOYD GEORGE.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE'S

Message to the French Army.

August 2nd, 1916.

SOLDIERS OF FRANCE,

We have come to the second anniversary of the outbreak of this hateful war, forced upon us by the crazy militarism of Germany. For two years you have repelled the desperate attacks of the enemy; for more than five months you have been holding in check before Verdun the formidable onslaught which your adversary had reckoned on beforehand as a triumphal victory. It is against you that Germany has attempted her utmost. She has used up in that attempt the resources which she had been piling together to secure the speedy decision for which she hoped. The victorious defence of the Verdun lines has won for the armies of the Republic, and for the whole French nation, a glory which resounds to the very ends of the earth.

While you were thus heroically opposing the rampart of your lines to the assault of the enemy, the British Empire has been able to ensure the freedom of the seas and to maintain the blockade; it has been able to create mighty

armies and to manufacture arms and munitions in such quantity that now at last the provision of the Allies exceeds that of the enemy.

Our new armies have come to the rescue, at your side. With you they have begun an offensive that will continue without halt or stay. You know what its first results have been, you know now and henceforward that the British troops are rivals in courage and heroism with yourselves, the tried soldiers of the Republic.

Doubtless our enemies will multiply their efforts to resist us, and we should be rash if we made light of the difficulties of our task. But things have changed. We have come to a new phase. It is we who are attacking now. During two years of defensive we have prevented the enemy from making progress ; now we are compelling him to retreat, step by step, from the lands which he has defiled and ravaged.

Brave men do not boast beforehand of the success for which they hope, but now, more than ever, you will be fighting with the assurance that if the Allies are strong in Right they are strong also in number, and in their store of all things by which the victory of Right can be made certain.

In this battle where we are brothers in arms, our admiration and our hope go out to you ; for our triumph the Allied nations hope

and wait, and with them all countries that reverence Honour and Justice.

Soldiers of France, it will be good to live in your land when you have chased the invader from its borders, and when your warlike virtues have assured Peace in Freedom for the generations that will follow after you.

GENERAL ROQUES' REPLY.

Your stirring message has gone straight to the hearts of the soldiers of France, who, after fighting for two years for the defence of the sacred soil of their country and the rights of humanity, are, notwithstanding all the battles they have fought, stronger than ever for the combat against their common enemy. They accept with pride the high testimony of esteem with which you have honoured them, and for which, in their name, I thank you.

In my turn, on this anniversary, I salute your soldiers, our gallant brethren in arms, who have hastened from all parts of the British Empire to the defence of civilisation against the Germanic hordes, and have grouped themselves into armies whose powerful organisation, made complete in so short a space of time, will remain for history a subject of admiration. In the battles which they are fighting side by side with us, your splendid troops are giving each

day proof of their unshakable solidity, and of their heroism. The soldiers of the Republic are proud to have such comrades : they acclaim their brilliant successes.

Decisive battles are in progress. At the moment selected by the Allies, in perfect unity of action, we are attacking the enemy, who will soon see his dream of domination vanish and will give way on every front.

Powerfully organised for these battles, abundantly supplied with all the material means of which they were deficient at the outset, with a deep appreciation of the rôle which they are playing at this time in the world for the triumph of Right and Justice, your armies and ours, together with those of our faithful Allies, will pursue without truce a struggle which will perhaps be still a long and severe one, but which will give the victory to our glorious standards.

And then, on the day of triumphant peace, after all the ordeals of a war which has no equal in history, after so much blood generously shed in common for the most just of causes, our two nations, having sealed on the fields of battle the concord which will have enabled them to conquer, will remain for ever united in their henceforth sacred agreement.

Please accept, therefore, the assurance of my deepest consideration and of my entire sympathy.

BELGIUM'S ORDEAL.

MR. ASQUITH'S PLEDGE AND TRIBUTE ON "BELGIUM'S DAY" 1916.

It is 85 years to-day since Prince Leopold ascended the Throne of the new kingdom of Belgium, and four months later the neutrality of that kingdom was guaranteed by the Treaty of London, to which Austria and Prussia, with Russia and Great Britain, were parties. For more than 80 years Belgium lived at peace under the ægis of that international guarantee, developing her resources with almost unparalleled industry and ingenuity, and contributing her full share to the common stock of European culture. Two years ago she was subjected to one of those testing ordeals which try and prove the stuff of which nations are made. The peace of Europe was wantonly broken, and Belgium was asked to become the stepping-stone and therefore the accomplice of the aggressor. With a decisiveness and an enthusiasm which blotted out all party differences and fused in a moment the whole nation into perfect unity, she declined the insulting offer and announced that if needs be she would support her refusal by

force. A more heroic resolve has never been taken by a small State since in the ancient world Athens and Sparta met the challenge of Persia and the East.

The odds at the outset were tremendous, for let it be always remembered, let us never forget, that the invasion of Belgium by Germany was not merely—I might almost say, not mainly—a military campaign. The facts have been laid bare after exhaustive and impartial inquiry, and we now know that the military operations of Germany were deliberately supported by and in some cases subordinated to organised butchery and pillage of the civil population, of carefully planned massacres of men, women and children, the sacking of industrious towns, the desecration and the wanton destruction of the most precious monuments of the piety and the artistic genius of the past. This infamous story, which takes us back to the spirit and the methods of the Thirty Years' War, will never be blotted from the memory of Belgium or from the escutcheon of Germany. The Belgium Army resisted inch by inch the advance of overwhelming force with tenacity, with endurance, and with brilliant courage, for which, let me say, the two great Western Allies owe them an immeasurable debt of gratitude. With its heroic King still at its head, that Army after the lapse of nearly two years, is still in Belgium and neither the

King nor his gailant troops have quailed. They form an important link in the Allied lines which hold Germany in check, well found in men and in munitions, and well able to cope with all the latest exigencies of modern war.

GERMAN PERSECUTIONS.

But I should like to pass for a moment from the Belgian Army to point out that not less admirable has been the spirit which continues to be shown by the civil population at home. Their patriotism has yielded neither to cajolery nor coercion, though it has been subjected to a full measure of both. As lately as last May—and I want, if I can, to bring this fact home to the knowledge of the whole civilised world—the German Governor-General issued a new decree to give increased stringency to the law against Belgian workmen who refused to work for their oppressors.

There can be no doubt of the object. It is to enable the German invaders to requisition Belgian labour for their own military needs. This new decree imposes heavier penalties on those who refuse, and it contains further the remarkable provision which I am about to read and which I hope will be recorded everywhere : “ Instead of having recourse to penal prosecutions, the governors and military commandants may order that recalcitrant workmen shall be led by force to the places where they are to

work." In other words, they are to be treated as slaves. This is the climax of a policy which has already resorted without success to starvation and deportation to subdue the untamable spirit of these brave men who refuse to become accomplices in the spoliation and oppression of their native land.

THE COMING REPARATION.

We here in Great Britain are taking note of these things. We do not mean to forget them ; we intend to exact reparation for them ; and in the meanwhile the spectacle of the sufferings and sacrifice of these patient and stubborn victims of inhumanity and tyranny is exciting the sympathy, not only of the Allies, but of the whole neutral world.

Your Excellency, in the name of the British people, I beg to send through you a message on this memorable anniversary. Tell your compatriots that their example has inspired and stimulated the Allied nations and Armies. Tell them that we are watching their suffering with sympathy and their patience and courage with heartfelt admiration. Tell them, finally, that when the hour of deliverance comes, and come it will before long—(cheers)—it will be to us here in Great Britain a proud and ennobling memory that we have had our share in restoring to them the freedom and independence to which no nation in the history of the world has ever shown a more indisputable title.—(Cheers.)

